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Message Text

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43
ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 EA-11 ISO-00 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00

DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 DRC-01

/069 W
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R 131633Z JUN 74
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9896
INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA

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MANILA PASS MEADOWS, CHAIRMAN CIVAIR DEL

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRN, FR
SUBJECT: CIVAIR: ABRAHAM LEAVES SGAC FOR MINISTERIAL CABINET

1. CLAUDE ABRAHAM, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF AIR TRANSPORT IN SGAC, WAS ON JUNE 12 APPOINTED DIRECTEUR DE CABINET OF NEW SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT, MARCEL CAVAILLE. HE HAS ALREADY ASSUMED HIS NEW FUNCTIONS.

2. NO SUCCESSOR TO ABRAHAM AT SGAC HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED. WE CONTACTED ESPEROU OF SGAC, WHO CLEARLY HAS HOPES OF BEING PROMOTED TO POSITION JUST VACATED BY ABRAHAM, AND HE INDICATED THAT NO DECISION IS LIKELY UNTIL LATHIERE IS BACK IN HIS OFFICE AFTER CURRENT SERIES OF CONCORDE FLIGHTS TO US. HE ALSO INDICATED THAT SELECTION OF DEPUTY DIRECTOR, WHILE THIS IS NOT A "POLITICAL" POSITION, WILL PROBABLY HAVE TO BE CLEARED WITH MINISTER; ABRAHAM IN HIS NEW FUNCTION IS CERTAINLY WELL-PLACED TO INFLUENCE CHOICE OF HIS SUCCESSOR AT SGAC.
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3. IN DEPARTING SGAC ABRAHAM ALSO VACATES HIS CHAIRMANSHIP OF ECAC'S ECONOMIC COMMITTEE NO. 2 ON CHARTERS. DOZ OF ECAC SECRETARIAT TELLS US HE HAS NO IDEA WHO WILL BE PICKED TO SUCCEED ABRAHAM AS CHAIRMAN, BUT SUCCESSOR HAS TO BE DESIGNATED BY EARLY SEPTEMBER PRIOR ECAC'S INTERMEDIATE SESSION THAT MONTH.

4. COMMENT: NEW POSITION IS A PROMOTION FOR ABRAHAM. WHILE ABRAHAM HAS NOT ALWAYS BEEN THE EASIEST PERSON TO DEAL WITH, HE IS WELL-KNOWN TO THE EMBASSY AND THIS AUGURS FAVORABLY FOR CLOSENESS OF OUR RELATIONSHIP AT OUTSET WITH CABINET OF NEW SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT. BECAUSE LATHIERE IS SO ENGROSSED WITH CONCORDE AND OTHER MATTERS AND THUS DELEGATES MUCH OF DAY-TO-DAY RESPONSIBILITY FOR AIR TRANSPORT POLICY TO HIS DEPUTY, POSITION OF DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF AIR TRANSPORT AT SGAC IS AN ESPECIALLY KEY ONE FOR OUR BILATERAL CIVAIR RELATIONSHIP. ALSO, BECAUSE OF LACK OF EXPERTISE -- OR OF INTEREST -- BY FOREIGN MINISTRY IN CHARTER QUESTIONS, RESPONSIBILITY FOR GOF CHARTER POLICY WAS VESTED ALMOST ENTIRELY IN SGAC AND SPECIFCALLY IN ABRAHAM UNDER LATHIERE'S LOOSE OVER-ALL DIRECTION, AND WE PRESUME THAT THE SAME SITUATION WILL PREVAIL WITH ABRAHAM'S SUCCESSOR. IDEAL SUCCESSOR FROM OUR STANDPOINT WOULD BE ESPEROU, WHO NOW HEADS UP SECTION ON BILATERAL RELATIONS IN DIRECTORATE OF AIR TRANSPORT. ESPEROU LACKS ABRAHAM'S ABRASIVENESS AND STUBBORNESS AND EMBASSY AND US CARRIERS HAVE FOUND ESPEROU TO BE ACCESSIBLE, FRIENDLY, UNDER-
STANDING, AND FLEXIBLE. ON THE ECAC SIDE, CHAIRMAN-SHIP OF ECONOMIC COMMITTEE NO. 2 IS OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO US BECAUSE OF OUR ONGOING DISCUSSIONS WITH ECAC ON CHARTER QUESTIONS AND POSSIBILITY OF RESUMPTION OF TRILATERAL TALKS ON CHARTERS THIS FALL (PARIS 14050). ABRAHAM WAS CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE FOR TOO SHORT A TIME FOR US TO ASSESS WHAT IMPACT ON US-ECAC RELATIONS HIS DEPARTURE MIGHT HAVE, AND THIS WILL DEPEND IMPORTANTLY ANYWAY ON WHOEVER IS
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ELECTED TO SUCCEED HIM AS CHAIRMAN.
IRWIN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CIVIL AVIATION, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 JUN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: izenbei0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974PARIS14369
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740153-0687
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740648/aaaabpbt.tel
Line Count: 109
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: izenbei0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 APR 2002 by cunninfx>; APPROVED <20 FEB 2003 by izenbei0>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CIVAIR: ABRAHAM LEAVES SGAC FOR MINISTERIAL CABINET
TAGS: ETRN, FR, (ABRAHAM, CLAUDE), (CAVAILLE, MARCEL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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